

CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

AM I GETTING OVER LOVING DICK?

It is astonishing, little book, how the mere act of writing that letter to Malcolm Stuart has changed my outlook.

That is it. It is now an outlook and for many, many months it has been an "inlook." I have had nothing to think about except Margie Waverly, and truly her experiences have loomed large.

Now I am going to take the affairs of Alice under my wing, if she will let me.

This morning Pat came to see me, but man-like, he did not say one word directly about Alice's terrible tragedy.

The one thing he did say, however, that touched me deeply was that Alice had said she would not think of leaving me until after the Vienna specialist had been here, and if I had to have an operation she wanted to nurse me through it.

Then he hesitated a minute and said, "Alice loves you very much, Margie."

"My dear Pat, I don't think she loves me any more than I love her. Try to imagine what my life would have been for the last year if it had not been for her gentle ministrations, not only to my body, but to my soul.

"Pat, I think Alice is a woman in a thousand. I am proud to call her my friend. She is not only worthy of but, to my mind, vastly superior to any man I know, including you. She will make up to you for all the sorrow you have had with your loves up to date."

And then Pat said a surprising thing.

"Why, Margie, I've never been in love before, never known what the word meant."

I could not help smiling a little, for that was so like a man. Pat had put his former loves into that convenient "forgettery" of his and they were as

though they had never been.

Men always think the last love is the only love. I wonder if you remember, little book, that even great lovers, Heine and Goethe, never remembered the fair ones they had loved, but only the ones they were loving at the time.

George Elliott, being a woman, was more honest. She frankly said after the death of Lewes and her marriage, "Why is it that the poets and writers say so much about first love and nothing about any that comes after?"

How one's mind changes, little book! If anyone said to me at the moment I shut the book-of-my-girlhood that I would ever have harbored the slightest thought of ever loving anyone but Dick I would have been horrified and insulted, but today I know that there can be a much more passionate and tender feeling in a woman's heart than I feel for Dick—than I have ever felt for Dick.

It almost seems to me as though our marriage was a mistake, and, little book, when either husband or wife begins to sense that, one may as well own up that the end is in sight.

I have not seen Dick since the evening he came in for a moment on his way to keep that telephone engagement. He evidently has put in a standing order at the florist's. Three times a week I get beautiful flowers.

At first there used to be a card with the word "Dick" on it among them, but now there is not even that.

I called him up today and told him it seemed a useless extravagance to have the florist send them to me when there were so many beautiful flowers in the Selwin garden.

"Don't you want them, Margie?" he asked. "I thought you loved flowers."

"I do," I answered, "but it rather